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THE RAGTIMER

OCTOBER 1968

PUBLISHED BY
RAGTIME SOCIETY
DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSICAL RAGTIME

arpeggio

THE
ENTERTAINER

Max Morath

with...

JIM TYLER

INSTRUMENTAL PROGRAM OF RAG CLASSICS

Max Morath	**piano**
Jim Tyler	**banjo**
Al Harris	**guitar**
Bill Turner	**bass**

THE ENTERTAINER..... MAX MORATH STEREO-ARP 1204S MONO-ARP 1204 **Price $5.00 ppd.**

Produced in cooperation with THE RAGTIME SOCIETY - Catalogue Order Number (RSR-007)

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THE ENTERTAINER (1902)	SCOTT JOPLIN
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A REAL SLOW DRAG (1911)	SCOTT JOPLIN
RAGTIME NIGHTINGALE (1915)	JOSEPH LAMB
THE RAGTIME DANCE (1902)	SCOTT JOPLIN
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AN OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS

We have come to the end of the long hot summer. Here in Toronto, as well as the rest of Canada, we experienced a lengthy strike by the post-office workers. Bills and cheques stopped coming in and we got used to the idea of not writing. Nothing was moving and it was easy to fall into a mesmerizing carry-over. In stirring about once more, we are letting you know that activities are stepping up again.

First of all, our communications vehicle is the subject of metamorphic change. Because we have found that the proposed regular publication of our magazine " THE RAGTIMER" gives us more problems than our enthusiasm anticipated, it has been decided to resume the brief but frequent mailing of letter-type releases for the time being.

This newsletter is the first of the kind we have in mind, and is based upon the notion that you would like to hear from us more often than has been possible through the magazine.

Now let us talk about the problems behind the publishing of "THE RAGTIMER". Sad but true, we discovered that production costs sky-rocketed beyond those that could be supported by the expected annual dues from our members. We even had to take money, grudgingly, from our record sales fund. Then too, apart from the work required to gather, prepare, authorize and edit material content, we found that production and technical difficulties could only be overcome after too much delay. After much discussion (also part of the delay), we concluded that it would be better to remain solvent and survive by using more frequent but less costly letter-type releases for regular contact purposes.

We are extremely sorry that things haven't worked out in favor of the magazine. We are also a mite embarassed as well, since we did make a commitment earlier in the year. The plain truth is that we lost a goodly portion of our members from last year, -members that we didn't expect to lose. Perhaps it was all due to our change to the magazine format bringing on a loss of contact with the members. Maybe it was due to the change in personnel making up the executive, -we know some people were upset by it and consequently seemed to lose the old spark they once had. Whatever the reasons, we've made enough excuses already. All we can say is that RAGTIME still remains a very big part of our lives and the executive is most anxious to continue the work began seven years ago.

Finally, a big thank you to all you staunch supporters who have stuck with us through thick and thin and have been so patient about our many shortcomings. To those who have wondered whether we were still alive, particularly those who are in their first year of membership, our humblest apologies.

In signing off this lengthy editorial, the executive is hoping that you will be agreeably surprised with our efforts to contact you more often in the months to come. We also hope that you will continue to encourage us with your indulgence and support.

FESTIVAL IMPRESSIONS

by BETTY REDELSHEIMER

Those of us who love the Goldenrod Showboat regard her as an eccentric, but delightful dowager aunt. Every family has one, who, resplendent in early-day finery, sips peach brandy for her "heart condition" and is apt to hoist her solid frame off the chair to execute a surprisingly light-footed Charleston.

Such is the character of the Showboat, who appeared for the Fourth Annual Ragtime Festival with a fresh coat of paint, and her gangplanks and railings bedecked with red, white and blue bunting. Above the levee, the Gateway Arch stood sentinel, while venerable Eads Bridge spanned the Mississippi to the north.

Inside, the Goldenrod had a chance to display her eccentricities, as well as her charms. On Friday night for instance, the air-conditioning in the beautiful new barroom on the upper deck went democratic, leaving Mike Montgomery and the Boll Weevils in a setting almost too authentic for comfort. Neither the heat, however, nor an occasinal whiff of breeze from the Illinois stockyards diminished the size or the enthusism of their audience.

In spite of such minor kinks in the machinery, Frank Pierson's addition of the barroom and renovation of the theatre balcony contributed immensely to the smooth operation of this year's Festival. Plaudits are also due Don Franz and Trebor Tichenor of the St. Louis Ragtimers, who masterminded the arrangements for the best organized Festival yet.

There were great moments, I am sure, that I didn't witness, and by naming specific groups and people, there is every chance that I will slight others who participated. This is not my intent and my defense is to point out the limitations of time and space. With four shows, simultaneously, on the Goldenrod, two each night on the excursion boat, Mississippi Belle, and more at the Levee House to the north, it was impossible to catch every performance.

Without question, Eubie Blake was the star of the weekend. Those who came to hear him out of a sense of nostalgia only, were doubly rewarded by the electricity of his performance. A trouper of the old school, Eubie continues to strive for perfection at a time when lesser men would be content to rest on their laurels. Edy Anton, unofficial Den Mother of the Showboat, and I, enjoyed our reunion with the Blakes-two very gracious and hospitable people, who are keenly interested in all that goes on around them.

Scott Joplin was well remembered in this, his centennial year, by Knocky Parker who played a variety of Joplin works in his ebullient style. The Mother's Boys gave forth in their usual fine manner with Original Rags and created a sensation by presenting their vocalist, Kerry Price, in several numbers. The St. Louis Ragtimers, who include several Joplin pieces in their repertoire, were ably joined by Bob Wright and his trombone.

Doc Souchon, with his guitar and gravelly voice, was at his best with "She's Just Perfect For Me." Bob Greene, from Washington, D. C., rendered Jelly Roll Morton on the piano like nobody's business, and seemed amused and delighted to be "cut by a seventeen year old kid". He was referring to young Steve Spracklen of Joplin, Missouri, who brought down the house with Artie Matthew's Pastime Rag No. 5.

Mike Schwimmer made the scene to write up the Festival for Jazz Record and to play first washboard with the Boll Weevils. He is scheduled to appear with the Chicago Symphony in August and I have a dream that this sort of thing will catch on.

No Festival is complete without the Karl Kramers. As their guests, they brought Ralph Edwards (This Is Your Life) and his family. It was a pleasure, also, to see Ragtime Society members, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hulbert, all the way from McGraw, New York.

There were others, no doubt, who should be mentioned. Lest I begin to sound like the Hedda Hopper of the ragtime circuit, however, let me conclude by bragging a little bit about my fellow ragtimers. One hears a great deal about what's wrong with America, but the comradery of the participants and the audience at this event, leads me to believe that what this country needs is more ragtime and less carrying-on. (HEAR! HEAR! - Ed.).

Wherever he is, I hope Scott Joplin is smiling. It was one helluva birthday party.

OBITUARY

It is with a great deal of regret that we inform you of the death of DOC SOUCHON. Doc was a great lover of ragtime and early jazz and recently, along with Al Rose completed a book entitled New Orleans Jazz: A Family Album.

Doc could always be seen at the St. Louis Ragtime Festival (see above), - strumming his guitar and singing the many Creole songs he knew and loved.

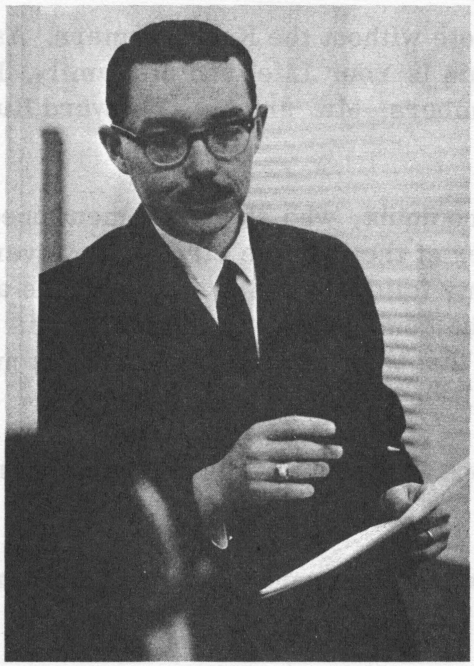
We will miss him!

IMPORTANT! The Society has acquired some hard-to-obtain copies of Max Morath's fine book - 100 Ragtime Classics. These are for sale at $15.00 a copy ppd.

This book is well worth the investment as it contains many important compositions not available in any other edition. It could well become a collector's item.

TEX WYNDHAM AND ALL THAT JAZZ OR

This article is reprinted from the DU PONT magazine - "BETTER LIVING" with the kind permission of the assistant editor - G. CLINTON COLLINS. It is with a great deal of pleasure that we present this fine article about TEX since he has been the most consistent contributor to our newsletter with many fine record reviews. The Ragtime Society salutes Tex and we are hoping to bring to you more member profiles in the near future.



YOUNG MANAGER WITH A HORN

TEX WYNDHAM is a slim and trim young man with a neat moustache and a fondness for tweed suits with vests. Your first thought, when you sight him down a corridor, is that you've located a perfect stereotype of the mild-mannered accountant.

But then you drive out on a Saturday night to the Pilgrim Gardens Lounge near Drexel Hill, Pa., and you see another Tex—a red-vested cornet player leading the Red Lion Jazz Band, wearing a scarlet glove to protect the finish of his horn and belting out "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate."

Tex has a few more surprises. Although he works in Wilmington as assistant manager of Treasurer's bonus and pension section, he is not an accountant. He is, in fact, a lawyer and mathematician. He studied the math at Swarthmore College, and the law at Harvard's Law School whence he graduated *magna cum laude*. He also earned an M.B.A. with the honor "high distinction" from Harvard Business School.

Another surprise: Tex has never been within a trumpet's blast of Texas; he is a native and long-time resident of Wilmington. His father simply wanted his son to have a two-fisted nickname. C. (for Charles) M. (for Mosby) Wyndham III is the name on his office door.

Inside that door, he swivels at right angles to his desk and says flatly, "My job with Du Pont is terrific. Working in the Treasurer's Department provides exactly the sort of thing I was looking for when I got out of school. But I've decided to make sure there's always a little time for my other interests. If I don't have a chance each day, say, to read a few paragraphs in a jazz magazine, well, I feel I've cheated myself a little. You let too many of those days go by and they become years, and finally you wind up like the fellows who say, 'Gee, I used to like jazz and play some piano, but I just don't get around to it anymore.' "

Tex has had that kind of determination most of his 31 years. As a fourth grader, he began piano lessons in a class of 30 students and one piano. Eager to play on something besides a

continued

MAPLE LEAF RAG.

BY

Tempo di marcia.

Young Manager with a Horn

continued

Tex is an expert on the movies of the 1910s and 20s, as well as the era's music. He gives talks on old films before the Brandywine Film Society and has provided piano background for Tom Mix and other heroes of the silent screen.

practice keyboard, he struck out on his own, and five years later he was a regular performer on a Wilmington radio show for children. Since then, he has taught himself to play — with professional competence—the cornet, trombone, tuba, banjo and bass saxophone.

Why all these instruments?

"It was the only way," Tex explains, "that I could actually *show* members of my bands how to play authentic San Francisco style jazz."

Back up a little on that. First, the bands: Tex organized one in high school, another in college, and he now leads a seven-man group that plays every other Saturday night.

And the music: Tex developed an early passion for ragtime and San Francisco jazz, which is, loosely speaking, Dixieland-gone-West. He worked up a one-man routine that amounts to a lecture on early jazz, illustrated with piano and song. While attending Harvard Business School, Tex did one or another of his acts six nights a week at a Boston club.

To make it easier for his musicians to learn tunes a half-century old, Tex writes out the chord progressions on all songs, working from old sheet music or taking down the chords while listening to records over and over.

Tex practices almost daily at his home in Mendenhall, Pa., where he lives with his wife, Gail, and two small children. His wife, Tex says, prefers swimming and horseback riding to jazz, but she has become something of a jazz fan "in self-defense." Nevertheless, when he spent some of his vacation playing the piano eight hours a day, he did his practicing at his mother's house. His mother was not home at the time.

Describing the music Tex plays is much easier than explaining his work. Since joining Du Pont in 1963, he has dealt with several aspects of the pension and bonus plans involving fine points of law and complex financial computations. Three years ago, for example, he assisted in developing the new survivor benefits feature of the Pension and Retirement Plan. Each year his section calculates the future pension obligations the company has incurred because x number of employees have worked another year and will probably retire with y years of service at z rate of pay. These calculations, among others, help determine the size of the company's annual contribution in support of the Pension and Retirement Plan.

Tex makes use of his training in evaluating the effect of new tax laws on the pension and bonus programs.

"Finance and control are the things I like most," Tex states, "and that's what this job is all about. Though I don't actually do a great amount of calculating now, I don't mind spending a morning over a 21-column worksheet, pushing the numbers around to see how they come out."

Shortly after Tex joined Du Pont, he began commuting 250 miles round trip each Saturday night to play at Your Father's Moustache in New York's Greenwich Village.

"Some people look askance at nightclubs and jazz, so I asked my boss whether my playing in the club might embarrass the company or hurt my career. He said he trusted my judgment and my own time was my business. He said not to worry."

Tex has taken the advice. When he stands at the microphone, looks out over the candlelit, checkered tablecloths and lifts his horn for a long, hard ride on "Maple Leaf Rag," he doesn't seem worried about anything at all.

SOUNDS FAMILIAR

ROGER HANKINS

PRETTY BABY
SONG
As Originally Introduced in the SHUBERT PRODUCTION "A WORLD OF PLEASURE"
LYRIC BY GUS KAHN
MUSIC BY TONY JACKSON AND EGBERT VAN ALSTYNE
JEROME H. REMICK & CO.
NEW YORK
DETROIT

Tony Jackson is supposed to have said that he would burn his music before he would ever release any of his compositions for publication. He didn't like the thought of other people exploiting his music. This is a strange attitude on his part, since a capable arranger could copy any of his ideas after only a few hearings. But it is interesting to see how his 'Pretty Baby' was exploited when he finally consented to publish that tune early in 1916.

First of all he had to share credits with an established composer Egbert Van Alstyne. This was considered good business since Jackson was unknown to the general public and Van Alstyne's name could insure a certain favorable response. The net effect of all this is that Van Alstyne is generally credited with composing 'Pretty Baby'. This illusion was strengthened later in 1916 when Remick published another song called 'Whose Pretty Baby Are You Now?'. The sheet music cover of this song included a reproduction of the original cover of 'Pretty Baby', while snatches of Jackson's melody were scattered through the chorus. This song was credited to Van Alstyne alone. The lyrics must have struck Jackson as being particularly ironic, since they told the sad story of how 'Pretty Baby' belonged to somebody else.

Jackson was still comparatively unknown in 1917, so he had to share composer credits with Van Alstyne again on 'I've Been Fiddle-ing'. Meanwhile, the publisher Remick was still capitalizing on the popularity of 'Pretty Baby' with a new song called 'Sweet Petootie', composed by Harry Tierney. This song was obviously successful because Sigmund Spaeth includes it in his index to the year 1917 in his book - "A History of Popular Music in America" (Random House). Though the melody of 'Sweet Petootie' is original, the structure of the song is patterned after that of 'Pretty Baby'. More particularly, the release of Tierney's song is almost identical to the very unusual harmonies of Jackson's release. In fact, 'Pretty Baby' lives on in other songs of the early 20's including at least one other Remick publication, Walter Donaldson's 'Beside a Babbling Brook'. Nearly all of these songs are in the key of Eb. The outstanding characteristic of each is the melody note Ab in the third bar resulting from an augmented 5th on the sub-mediant, immediately following the same Ab used in the subdominant. This Ab sound is most unusual and seems more appropriate to church music than to a house pianist. Jackson uses this same release altered slightly in 'I've Been Fiddle-ing.'

Jelly Roll Morton was also fond of this Ab sound, but he would include it in his main melody lines, not just the releases. 'If You Knew' (how I love you) has the Ab overlapping the 2nd and 3rd bars of the chorus. 'Chicago Breakdown' has the identical overlapping between bars 6 and 7, though the Ab notation is

not apparent because of a difference of key. Jelly's harmony is somewhat different than Tony's. He uses the Ab as a lowered 9th on the mediant chord, thereby achieving a smoother and lusher sound, but every bit as churchy as that of his friend.

Pretty Baby's influence may not be confined only to the years following its publication. There is a possibility that 'Florida Rag' of an earlier decade was a distortion of 'Pretty Baby'. It may be noted that the second theme of "Florida Rag" was used by Harry Tierney in his "Variety Rag', which in a roundabout way could suggest that Tierney once again was under the Jackson influence. This influence was considerable, even long before Jackson finally put his ideas on paper.

One example that comes readily to mind is the 'Dockstader Rag' of Les Copeland published by Remick in 1912. The trio or interlude is definitely reminiscent of 'The Naked Dance' which Tony is supposed to have played around the turn of the century. Copeland, as Rudi Blesh pointed out, belonged to the 'showy' school of Mike Bernard, and his treatment of the 'Naked Dance' clearly points out the difference between mere novelty effects and real Ragtime. In Jackson's version, as played by Jelly Roll, the right hand is simple and direct, sharing the listener's interest equally with the left hand. In Copeland's arrangement, the lis-

tener's interest is immediately focused on the intricate fingering of the right hand. The notes are squeezed together for easier digital manipulation, the right hand is kept busy at all times, and ties are used to make the right hand busier than it actually is. The poor left hand might as well not even exist.

Perhaps it was examples such as this that caused Jackson to want to save his music from popular exploitation. At the same time, he could see that others would write his ideas down whether or not he ever did. Undoubtedly this last fact had a lot to do with his relenting and allowing 'Pretty Baby' to be published. On the other hand, the subsequent history of 'Pretty Baby' may have had the reverse effect on him and prevented him from writing down his more significant efforts.

'Dockstader Rag' also has something to offer as regards the peculiar partnership between Tony Jackson and Egbert Van Alstyne. One can notice a distinct similarity between the first theme of Dockstader and the opening theme of Van Alstyne's 'Ragtime Chimes' which dates back to 1901. This resemblance is equally as strong as that of the trio to 'The Naked Dance'. Since Tony Jackson agreed to share composer credits with Van Alstyne on some of his works, it is reassuring to know that on one occasion at least the two of them actually did collaborate on a composition, albeit the result was arranged by Les Copeland. Tony Jackson deserved a better fate.

SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN - appearing at the Sutton Place Hotel , Bay & Wellesley in Toronto between 5:30 and 8:00 p. m. ; also, at Ports of Call between the hours of 9:00 and 1:00 with the fine clarinetist - HENRY CUESTA.

DON BURNS - appearing in Buffalo.

JOHNNY MADDOX - **appearing** at the Drake Hotel in Regina, Saskatchewan Nov. 4 - Dec. 7

MAX MORATH - appeared in California and Texas recently. Max is working on a show featuring himself all alone in a turn of the century idiom. Portions of this show were presented by Max in Durango, Colorado this summer, and were very well received. We're wishing Max every success!

WALLY ROSE - appearing at the Gold Dust Lounge, 247 Powell St. in San Francisco.

TREBOR TICHENOR and THE ST. LOUIS RAGTIMERS - always can be heard on the Goldenrod Showboat in St. Louis, Missouri.

TEX WYNDHAM - at Tyler's Restaurant, 1101 Philadelphia Pike with his own band- the Red Lion Jazz Band. (see article on Tex this issue).

Performers, keep us posted on your wherabouts and your schedule will appear on this page.

SUGAR CANE

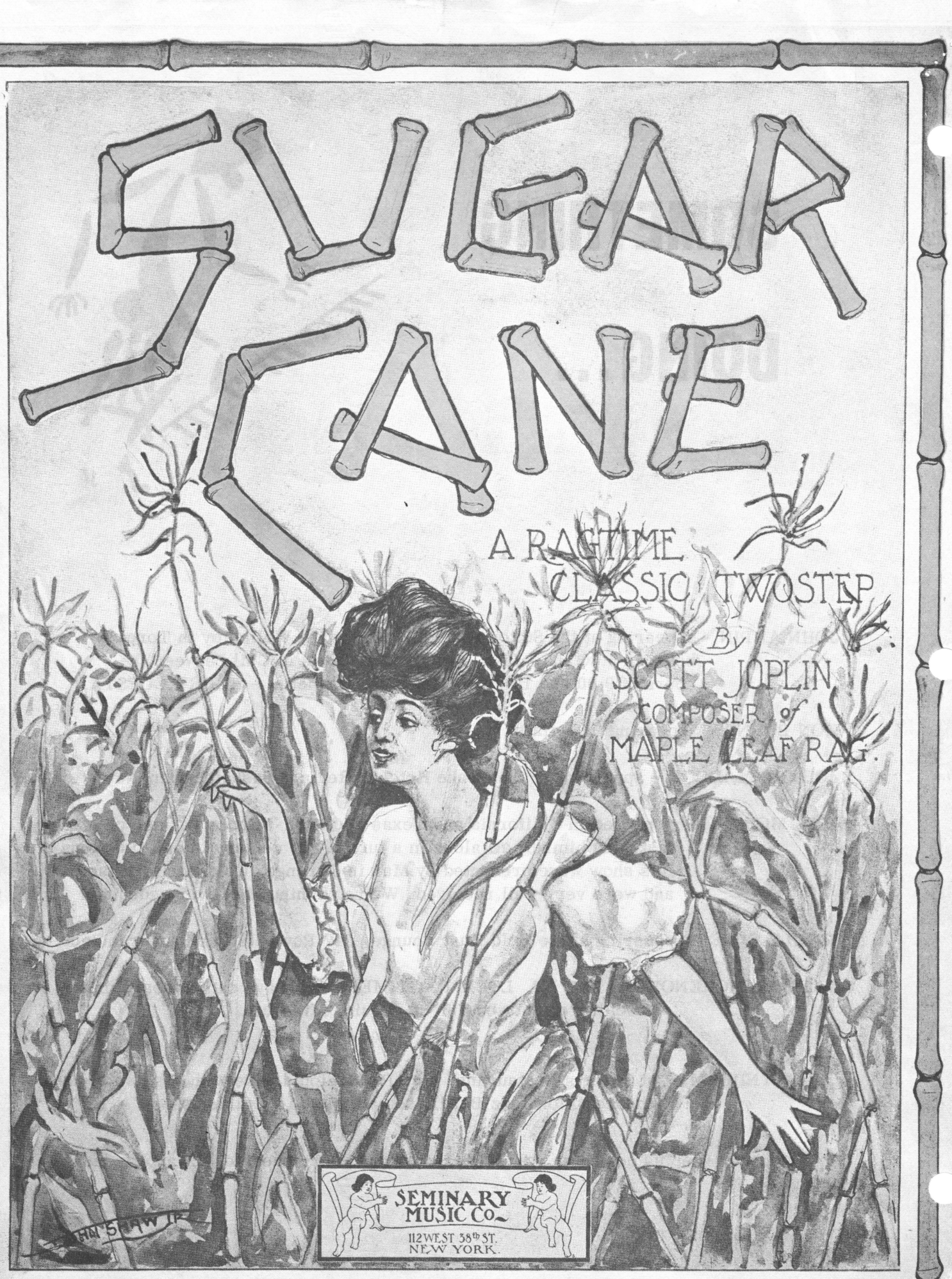
A RAGTIME CLASSIC TWOSTEP

By

SCOTT JOPLIN

COMPOSER of

MAPLE LEAF RAG.



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